

# BRFSS

## Fact Sheet

# Cervical Cancer Screening



Tennessee  
Department of Health

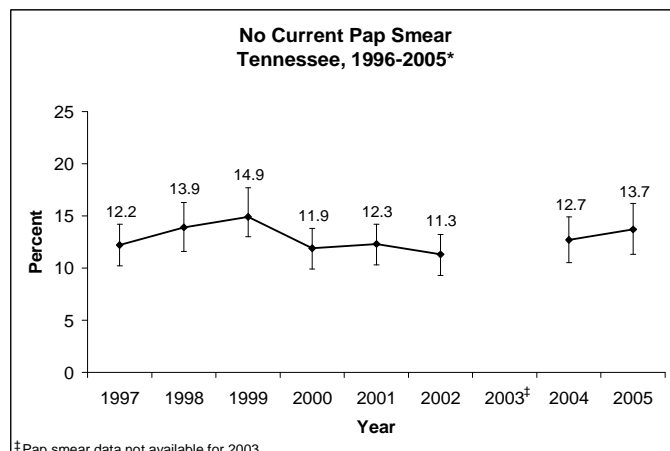
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Nashville, TN 37243

<http://state.tn.us/health>

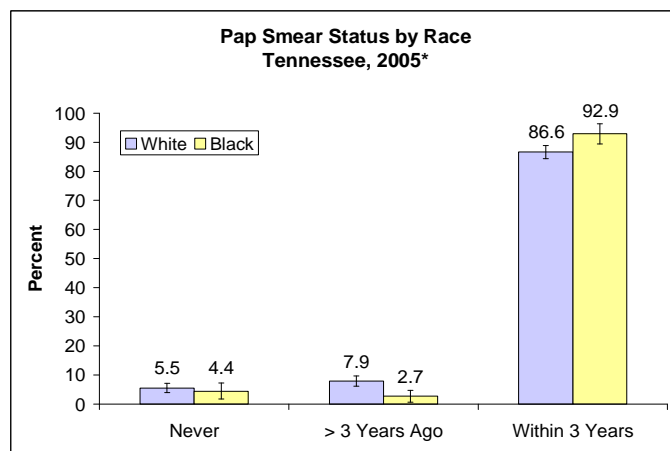
Approximately 100 women die of cervical cancer in Tennessee each year. A Pap smear is a microscopic examination of cells scraped from the cervix. Regular Pap tests decrease a woman's risk for developing and dying from cervical cancer because they can detect precancerous cervical lesions at early, treatable stages.<sup>1</sup> The United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends cervical cancer screening at least every 3 years beginning within 3 years of onset of sexual activity or at age 21 (whichever comes first).<sup>2</sup> Meeting this recommendation is important for increasing the quality and years of healthy life of women in Tennessee.

- In 2005, 86.3% ( $\pm 2.4$ )\* of Tennessee women aged 18 and older reported they had a current Pap test (i.e. within the past 3 years). 6.9% ( $\pm 1.4$ ) reported they had had a Pap test more than 3 years ago, and 6.9% ( $\pm 2.1$ ) reported they had never had a Pap test.<sup>†</sup>
- Between 1997 and 2005, the percentage of women *without* a current Pap test (i.e. they had never had a Pap test or it had been more than 3 years since the procedure was last done) remained fairly constant at approximately 11-15%.

- The percentage of women *without* a current Pap test was higher among whites (13.4%  $\pm 2.3$ ) than among blacks (7.1%  $\pm 3.5$ ).



- Young women aged 18-24 years (22.7%) and women 65 years and older (32.3%) had the highest prevalence of individuals *without* a current Pap test.



### References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/cervical/breast](http://www.cdc.gov/cervical/breast))
2. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force ([www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm))
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2000.

Prepared by the Tennessee Department of Health; Office of Policy, Planning and Assessment; Surveillance, Epidemiology and Evaluation section based on 2005 TN Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data.

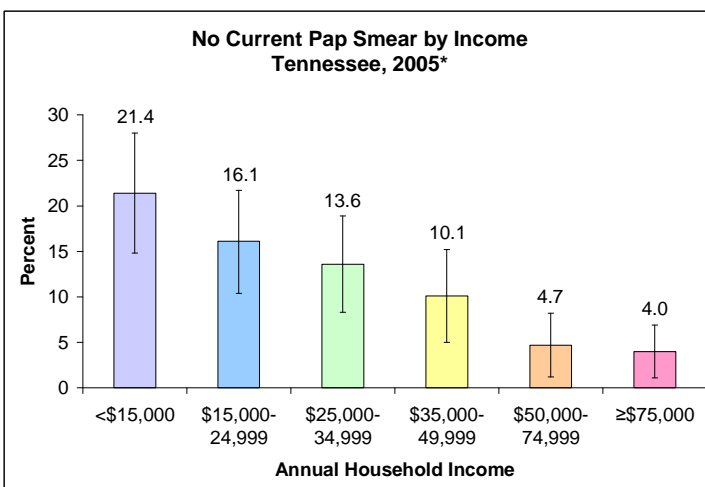
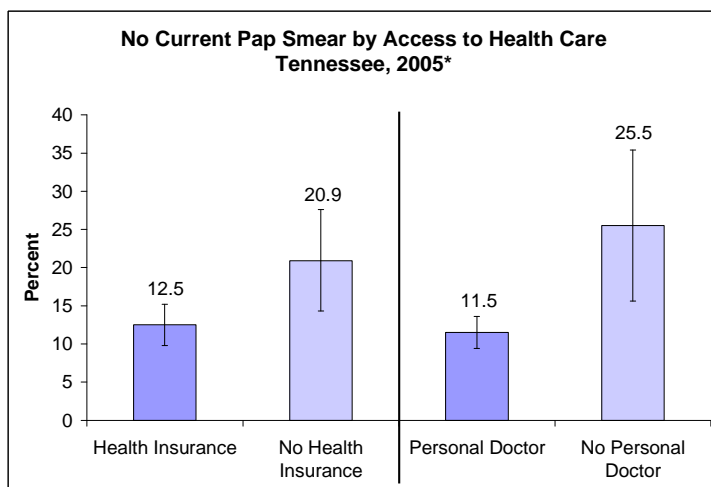
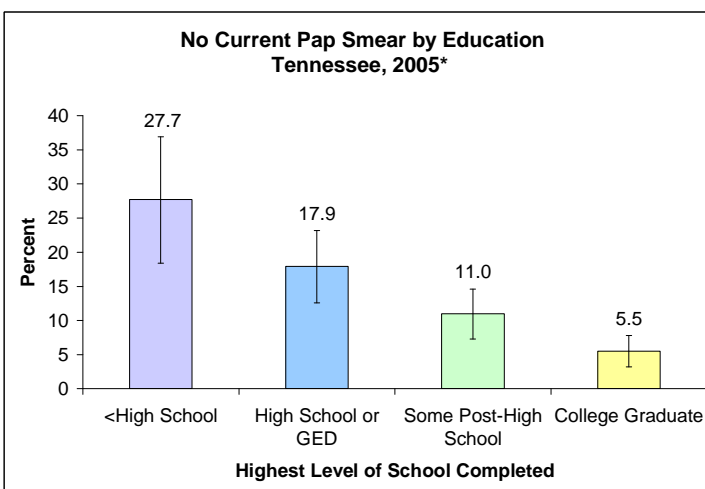
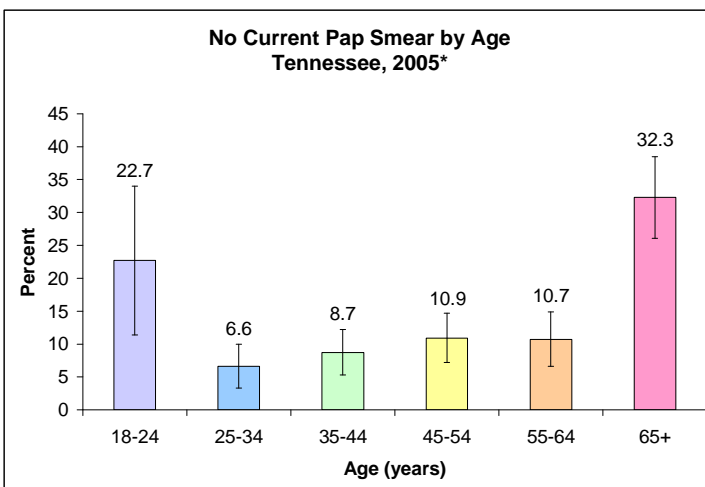
- The percentage of women *without* a current Pap test decreased with increasing level of education, from 27.7% among women with less than a high school education to 5.5% among college graduates.

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- The percentage of women *without* a current Pap test decreased with increasing annual household income, from 21.4% among those with an income of less than \$15,000 to 4.0% among those with an income of \$75,000 or more.
- Women without health insurance were more likely than those with health insurance to be *without* a current Pap test (20.9% vs. 12.5%, respectively).
- Similarly, women without a personal doctor or health care provider were more likely to be *without* a current Pap test than those with such a person (25.5% vs. 11.5%, respectively).
- Modifiable risk factors for cervical cancer include smoking and eating a diet low in fruits and vegetables.<sup>1</sup> Among all women aged 18 years and older, 24.4% ( $\pm 2.2$ ) were current smokers, and 72.4% ( $\pm 2.3$ ) reported eating less than 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables.



\*The number above each column indicates the percent value for that column. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, as do ranges for percentages given in the text.

<sup>†</sup>Women who reported they had had a hysterectomy were excluded from the analysis.